

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to make a number of editorial revisions. Due to the number of changes involved, a substitute specification and abstract have been prepared and are submitted herewith. No new matter has been added. Enclosed are marked-up copies of the specification and abstract indicating the changes made therein.

In addition, claims 1-8 have been amended so as to make a number of editorial revisions. These revisions have been made to place the claims in better U.S. form. None of these amendments have been made to narrow the scope of protection of the claims, nor to address issues related to patentability and therefore, these amendments should not be construed as limiting the scope of equivalents of the claimed features offered by the Doctrine of Equivalents.

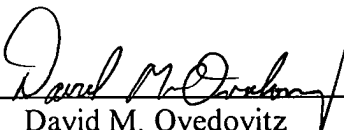
Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kawamura (US 6,452,880).

It is noted that Kawamura was patented on September 17, 2002 which is after the filing date of October 12, 2001 of the present application. Further, it is also noted that Kawamura was filed on November 3, 2000 which is after the filing dated of October 13, 2000 of Japanese Application No. 2000-313673 from which the present application claims priority. Enclosed herewith is a verified translation of Japanese Application No. 2000-313673 from which the present application claims priority. It is submitted that Japanese Application No. 2000-313673 supports the subject matter claimed in claims 1-8 of the present application. As a result of the submission of this verified translation of the priority document, it is apparent that Kawamura can no longer be used as a reference to reject claims 1-8. Therefore, claims 1-8 should now be allowable.

.. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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